Bad shape of indigenous soft drinks companies

†*266. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various indigenous soft drinks companies have either been closed or are on the verge of the closure;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to provide financial assistance to restart the said soft drinks companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The soft drink manufacturing does not require license under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 and therefore, the information about some units having either been closed or being on the verge of closure is not furnished to the Government.

(c) and (d) No such specific scheme is being operated. However, the Department of Food Processing Industries, under Plan Schemes, provides assistance for seting up, expansion and modernization of agro-horticultural (including meat, poultry, dairy & fisheries) based Food Processing units.

Nuclear and Conventional Weapons

*268. SHRI CM. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistan's military regime has lately proposed to India a strategic restraint regime on nuclear and conventional weapons on a reciprocal basis to avoid arms race in the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's response and reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH); (a) and (b) On 13th June, 2000, Pakistan, through an official statement, suggested that India and Pakistan

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.